

## Message Text

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17

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 L-03 H-02 ACDA-07 SAJ-01 DODE-00 /056 W

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R 260531Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5150

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

/AMEMBASSY MANILA 3046

CINCPAC

S E C R E T SINGAPORE 2038

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, SN, RP

SUBJ: CINCPAC CHIEF OF STAFF'S CALL ON SINGAPORE DEPUTY PRIME  
MINISTER/DEFENSE MINISTER

REFS: A. SINGAPORE 2004 (NOTAL); B. STATE 099293

1. CINCPAC CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL WILLIAM MOORE CALLED ON  
GOS DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER/DEFENSE MINISTER GOH KENG SWEE  
APRIL 24. I ACCOMPANIED GENERAL MOORE ON THIS CALL. DEFENSE  
MINISTRY PERMSEC PANG TEE POW AND DEFENSE ATTACHE CAPTAIN  
GAMMON WERE ALSO PRESENT AT THE MEETING. DURING THE CONVERSATION  
THE FOLLOWING POINTS OF INTEREST EMERGED:

2. DR. GOH OPENED BY REMARKING THAT US-GOS MILITARY RELATION-  
SHIPS HAD BEEN GOOD, AND THAT THE US MILITARY HAD BEEN VERY  
HELPFUL TO SINGAPORE. GENERAL MOORE SAID HE EXPECTED TO KEEP  
THINGS THAT WAY.

3. IN DR. GOH'S NEXT REMARKS HE MADE IT PLAIN THAT ADVERSE GOS  
REACTION TO INCREASED COSTS OF COUNTERINSURGENCY COURSE ORIGINATED

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WITH PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW HIMSELF. ACCORDING TO DR. GOH,

THE PM HAD FELT THAT SUCH A COUNTERINSURGENCY COURSE WAS A VERY IMPORTANT FEATURE OF SINGAPORE'S DEFENSIVE PREPARATIONS AND HAD BEEN GIVEN TO BELIEVE DURING HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON IN MAY 1975 THAT US WOULD BE RESPONSIVE AND WOULD PROVIDE THE COURSE AT NOMINAL EXPENSE. THEREFORE, PM LEE WAS "VERY UPSET" AT THE HIGH COST. SINGAPORE HAD HOPED MALAYSIA WOULD PARTICIPATE, BUT GOM HAD RESOLVED TO GO AHEAD ON ITS OWN SINCE A COUNTERINSURGENCY SITUATION WOULD INEVITABLY ARISE IN THIS AREA SOONER OR LATER.

4. I TOOK THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REITERATE WHAT I HAD TOLD PANG TEE POW THE PRECEDING DAY ON FINDING WAYS TO OFFSET COSTS OF COUNTER-INSURGENCY COURSE (REFTEL A): WHILE CONGRESSIONAL RESTRICTIONS AFFECTED COUNTERINSURGENCY COURSE ITSELF, OFFSETS MIGHT BE POSSIBLE IN OTHER ASPECTS OF US-GOS MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS.

5. ON SITUATION IN OTHER PARTS OF THIS REGION, DR. GOH DECLARED THAT GOS WAS VERY PLEASED WITH OUTCOME OF RECENT THAI ELECTIONS, AND COMMENTED THAT RESULTS WERE FAR BETTER THAN ANYONE HERE HAD ANTICIPATED. IN GOS VIEW, THE NEW THAI GOVERNMENT ENJOYED A GREAT ADVANTAGE OVER THE PRECEDING ONE IN THAT A CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT HEADED BY SENI PRAMOT WOULD ENJOY FIRM BACKING OF THAI MILITARY -- THIS DESPITE THE SUDDEN DEATH OF GENERAL KRIT.

6. DR. GOH ALSO REMARKED THAT GOS WAS VERY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT SITUATION IN MALAYSIA UNDER PRIME MINISTER DATUK HUSSEIN ONN. DATUK HUSSEIN ONN IMPRESSED SINGAPOREANS AS BEING A FIRM LEADER WHO WAS CAPABLE OF MAKING THE RIGHT DECISIONS AND FOLLOWING THROUGH ON THEM. AS A RESULT OF THESE FAVORABLE DEVELOPMENTS IN THAILAND AND MALAYSIA, SINGAPORE WAS NOW MORE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE OF SEA.

7. AT CONCLUSION OF MEETING, I REFERRED TO QUESTION OF SINGAPORE A-4 TRAINING IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND MENTIONED THAT US AND GOP WERE ABOUT TO OPEN DISCUSSIONS ON FUTURE OF US MILITARY BASES IN THE PHILIPPINES. I HOPED, I SAID, THAT IF FILIPINOS BROUGHT UP SUBJECT OF BASES AGREEMENT WITH MEMBERS OF SINGAPORE MISSION WHICH WAS ABOUT TO LEAVE TO INVESTIGATE A-4 TRAINING FACILITIES, SINGAPOREANS WOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT BASES AGREEMENT WAS A VERY SECRET

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SENSITIVE MATTER FOR THE US AND THE PHILIPPINES. DR. GOH GOT THE POINT, AND STATED THAT "WE WILL REMAIN SILENT." THIS WAS PRIOR TO RECEIPT OF DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE CONTAINED IN REFTTEL B. SUBSEQUENT TO RECEIPT OF THIS GUIDANCE, I HAD OPPORTUNITY DURING DINNER HOSTED BY PANG TEE POW FOR GENERAL MOORE TO FOLLOW THE LINE THAT STATUS OF US FORCES IN PHILIPPINES WAS MATTER OF CONCERN TO US AND GOP ALONE, AND THAT STATUS OF SINGAPORE FORCES IN PHILIPPINES WAS SEPARATE ISSUE WHICH GOS MIGHT WISH TO CLARIFY

WITH GOP. I FURTHER SAID THAT I WAS SURE SINGAPORE MISSION WOULD BE WELL RECEIVED BY US AUTHORITIES WITH RESPECT TO INSPECTION OF A-4 TRAINING FACILITIES.

8. COMMENT: RE PARAS 2 AND 3 ABOVE, IT SEEMS TO US THAT WHAT DR. GOH WAS SAYING WAS THAT WHILE SINGAPORE HAD ITS PROBLEMS WITH THE US OVER THE COUNTERINSURGENCY COURSE, IT WAS NOT LETTING THIS ELEMENT OVERCOME ITS AWARENESS THAT US-GOS MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS IN GENERAL HAVE BEEN VERY BENEFICIAL TO SINGAPORE. HOLDRIDGE

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